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COMMITTEES:

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COMMERCE AND LABOR,
VICE CHAIR

Op-ed for Sen. Kuipers:

Michigan's economy, particularly here in west Michigan, has been hard hit by the recent recession. While Michigan will see a turn-around shortly, that doesn't matter much to our friends and neighbors waiting in unemployment lines.

To help improve Michigan's business climate and help get companies hiring again, my fellow Republican lawmakers and I have pushed a broad effort called the JOBS Action Plan, which aims to help companies create manufacturing jobs, spur new small businesses and provide incentives to expand the state's slow-moving economy.

Just recently, the Senate passed legislation that would reduce the tax burden for small businesses that hire new employees. Our effort would have helped businesses hire more people instead of punishing them for expanding. It would have created a tax credit to offset the Single Business Tax cost of adding employees. To get the credit, businesses would have had to offer health care coverage or insurance to the new people they hire. Unfortunately, the governor vetoed the legislation.

But we are not giving up on our commitment to fight for every Michigan job. Since we proposed our initial effort in late 2003, Republicans in the Legislature have approved measures that help the state's tool & die industry, renew the commitment to the Michigan Economic Growth Authority, provide incentives for venture capitalists to invest in the state, and establish a Clean Michigan Initiative revolving loan program so local communities can start needed sewer projects.

We Republicans in the Legislature have led the effort to improve the economy and strengthen policies that allow for more job creation. We're fighting to keep taxes low and reduce burdensome regulations to ensure our children are as blessed to live in this great state as we are.

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